

FIVE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE GETTING A PET

TEXT AND PHOTO: FAYEKA ZABEEN SIDDIQUA

While owning a pet can be extremely rewarding, it is important to remember that pet ownership also comes with a huge responsibility. As a pet owner it is very important to thoroughly research the basics of pet care before acquiring any new pet so that you know you will be able to understand and meet different kinds of needs of the animal.



1 It's a Long-term Commitment

When you decide to offer a pet a home, remember it should be for the pet's lifetime. Responsible pet ownership also means committing to take care of the pet through their sickness and health. The average lifespan of dogs and cats is around 12 years, with some dogs and cats living until 15 or even 20 years. Everyone wants puppies and kittens because they are unbearably adorable, but you should also be prepared to take care of them as they grow up.

2 Spend Enough Time

Caring for a pet takes a considerable amount of time every day. Exercise, socialisation, grooming, feeding, reward-based training, play time and providing company and attention are all critical aspects of pet ownership.

3 Expect the Unexpected

Breaking and throwing things. Chewing your favourite plants. Scratching the furniture. Most of us never expect to face these behaviours from our pets before bringing them home. Relax, they don't do it out of anger or spiteful reasons and the good news is these behaviours can be managed. Bringing a pet into your home is like having a toddler. When young they can be a little destructive until they are taught not to be – in the nicest possible way.

4 Fitting them into Your Lifestyle

Companion animals always depend on human company, so make sure your lifestyle can accommodate them. Taking regular trips away, a busy social life, long working hours or a home that does not allow having pets- these are some of the factors that need to be considered beforehand.

5 Costs of Pet Ownership

The costs of pet ownership will vary depending on the type of animal you choose. Remember that pets are an addition to the family and costs like vaccination, desexing, food, deworming, health checks, vet bills are also involved with pet ownership. If an emergency or accident occurs, you will also be responsible to pay for any emergency veterinary treatment if required.

Pets bring a great deal of unconditional love and friendship into our lives. So before getting one, make sure you are capable of treating them just like your family.

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